

1991

Iannone, Carol: Letters Opposing Nomination of (1991): Correspondence 19

Phyllis Franklin

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MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA 10 ASTOR PLACE NEW YORK, NY 10003 (212) 475-9500

18 July 1991

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
335 SROB
Washington, DC 20510-3901

Dear Senator Pell:

As I read your statement of 17 July about the nomination of Carol Iannone, I was reminded of Bob Lumiansky, whom I believe you knew and with whom I had the honor of working during my first year as executive director of the MLA. I can imagine his strong--and probably salty--seconding of the values you affirmed yesterday.

Though my thanks and the thanks of the MLA come without the color Bob might have added, our gratitude is deeply felt. Once again, the humanities community is in your debt for your commitment to the important purposes for which the NEA and NEH were established and for your commitment to the high standards these agencies were designed to encourage. MLA members and others in the humanities will be most heartened to know that your concern about the NEH and the quality of NEH council members is ongoing, and so I seek your permission to publish your statement in the Fall issue of the MLA Newsletter.

We are particularly grateful for your leadership on the basic issue of fitness for NEH council members at a time when several public controversies--each deserving serious consideration in its own right--became so enmeshed in discussions of this nomination that a number of respected people found it hard to disentangle the issues. Taking the stand you did must therefore have been more difficult than it otherwise would have been. We thank you for having the courage to do so.

I wish also to express my appreciation for the courtesy shown to me by Alexander Cray and other members of your staff. The past few months have been trying; throughout, Sandy made himself available for discussion, asked probing questions, and gave thoughtful consideration to the concerns we raised.

I hope that the rest of the summer will be calmer than the spring has been. With good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which appears to read 'Phyllis Franklin', is written above the typed name.

Phyllis Franklin
Executive Director